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8 December 1955

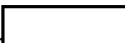


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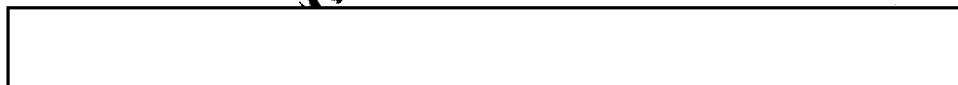
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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1. BRITAIN TO OFFER JORDAN MILITARY INDUCEMENT TO JOIN BAGHDAD PACT

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Britain is planning to offer to strengthen the Jordanian Arab Legion at an initial cost of 4,500,000 pounds (\$12,600,000) plus an increase of 1,000,000 pounds (\$2,800,000) in its annual subsidy to the legion, as an inducement to Jordan to enter the Baghdad pact.

According to the British War Office, the current visit to Jordan of General Templer, chief of the Imperial General Staff, reflects London's concern with the general problem of anti-Western influences in Jordan as well as with strengthening the Baghdad pact.

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Templer hopes his visit will bolster the morale of the Arab Legion and offset the effects of pro-Egyptian propaganda on the prestige and popularity of General Glubb, the legion's British commander.

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Comment

The recent deterioration of Britain's position in Jordan has evidently caused London to consider a substantial increase in its military aid to that country. Britain had earlier refused a Jordanian request that it equip an additional infantry division and an armored brigade as the price of Jordan's adherence to the Baghdad pact. Britain now gives the Arab Legion the equivalent of \$25,200,000 annually, and in addition gives Jordan each year the equivalent of \$980,000 for its national guard and \$6,580,000 in financial and economic aid.

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2. USSR REPORTED OFFERING TO BUILD OIL REFINERY IN SYRIA

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Moscow has reportedly offered to supply Syria with an oil refinery at a price "lower than the international market."

The Syrians claim that the Iraq Petroleum Company recently agreed to supply a Syrian refinery with crude oil and to construct a pipeline to replace the one from Iraq to Haifa, which has been closed since the Arab-Israeli hostilities began.

Soviet-Syrian trade talks which have been under way since October centered around a trade and payments agreement and envisaged financial and technical aid for Syrian long-term industrial projects. The Syrian refinery might cost as much as \$15,000,000 in foreign exchange and require the presence of Communist technicians to operate the refinery for a number of years.

The reported Soviet offer highlights the recently stepped-up Soviet bloc activities in Syria. Czechoslovakia has contracted to build two cement factories estimated to cost \$4,500,000 and a sugar refinery at \$1,600,000. East Germany is supplying a cement plant costing \$1,300,000, and Poland is offering aid on Syrian railroad construction which may reach \$65,000,000.

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3. BUCHAREST MEETING MAY DECIDE FUTURE OF COMINFORM

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] the meeting was called to decide whether that organization should be dissolved or whether it should adopt "a new formula for the organized exchange of experience."

[REDACTED]

Comment

Although there has been recurrent speculation in the past year that the

Cominform would be dissolved, [REDACTED] the firmest indication yet received that its status is under consideration. In any event, its present functions will probably be continued. These functions appear to be confined to publication and propaganda, but Soviet regard for the organization has been indicated by the presence of two of the USSR's top ideologists on its publication board and consistent support of the organization through periods when it could have been quietly dropped or usefully sacrificed.

The Cominform is a liability to the USSR at a time when Soviet propaganda stresses peaceful coexistence and the independence of national Communist parties. Its dissolution would have a favorable effect on neutralist powers such as India and Yugoslavia. On the other hand, dissolution would be a tacit admission that the Cominform contributes to world tensions--a Western charge the USSR has steadily denied.

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THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION
(Information as of 1700, 7 December)

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reported. [redacted] No significant military activity has been [redacted]

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The American embassy in Tel Aviv notes accelerated civil defense measures there during the past week, [redacted]

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Israeli prime minister Ben-Gurion's statements on cease-fire agreements, as reported by UN truce chief Burns after his interview on 5 December, indicate that there has been no change in Israel's views. Burns is not optimistic regarding the outcome of his current efforts. He also told the American consul general in Jerusalem that Ben-Gurion does not appear to be in good health and expressed doubt that the prime minister would remain in office long. [redacted]

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